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A
Funeral Sermon

On Occasion of the much lamented

DEATH

OF THE

Reverend Mr. *Joshua Merrel, &c.*

Funeral Sermon

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OF THE

Rev. Mr. John M...

A
Funeral Sermon

PREACH'D at
COVENTRY, *July* 3. 1716.

On Occasion of the much lamented

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OF THE

Reverend Mr JOSHUA MERREL,

Late Minister of the Gospel there.

By JOHN WARREN.

L O N D O N:

Printed for Richard Ford, at the Angel in
the Poultry M.DCC.XVI.

Price Four Pence

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W. M. M. M.

GOVENTRY, July 3. 1716.

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REVEREND MR. J. A. MERRILL

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By JOHN W. ARRELL.

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Printed by Richard Ford, at the Angel in the Strand, MDCCLXXI.

The Dedication.

To the Congregation of Protestant
Dissenters in Coventry, lately under
the Ministry of Mr. Joshua Merrel.

My very kind and good Friends :

WHEN I had prevailed with your surviving Pastor to Publish that serious Discourse we had from him at the Funeral of his worthy Fellow Labourer, I could not refuse to attend on him after this manner to the Press, and into the World.

I was the more easily perswaded to do this, because it gives me the Opportunity of testifying to all, the grateful Sense I have of your cordial and continued Affection, and my just Concern for the Interest of the Gospel among you.

You will allow me to put you in mind, that it hath been the Honour and Privilege of the City of Coventry, and the Parts adjacent, to have had a constant Succession of serious Christians living and dying there, not only since the Deliverance of the Land from Popery, but for a long time before.

That faithful and undaunted Servant of Christ, Mr. John Wickliff, who lived and died no farther from you than Lutterworth, was doubtless an Instrument of much good among your Predecessors above Three Hundred Years ago, and indeed he may well be accounted the Morning Star of the Times of Reformation.

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Your City, and the Country round, have been a Plantation and Seed-Plot of many Eminent Professors of the Purer Christianity ever since his Time, and the Martyrs and Confessors that God raised up among you in succeeding Ages, especially in the Reigns of Henry VII. Henry VIII. and Queen Mary, have obtained a good Report, and stand recorded in the Acts and Monuments of the Church of Christ.

From the fiery Trial in the Marian Reign, there have never been wanting with you considerable Numbers of devout Christians, who not satisfied with that defective Reformation which the Court of England judged most convenient for their Political Interests, have constantly breathed after a more thorough Conformity to the Rule of the Gospel, according to the best Examples of the Foreign Churches.

It was your Advantage, during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, and King James the First, to have with you several serious and profitable Preachers, who tho' they did not wholly separate from the National Establishment, were often interrupted in their Ministry by Citations, Prosecutions, and Censures in the Spiritual Courts, because they could not approve of all the Rituals of Worship, nor of those Rules of Ecclesiastical Government that were then in use. Of these, none has left a more fragrant Name than the Venerable Mr. Humphrey Fen, who spent above 40 Years among you with great Success.

If my Information be right, He had not been dead many Years before God sent you those two excellent Men, Dr. Obadiah Grew, and Dr. John Brian, both of them burning and shining Lights, the one a Barnabas, the other a Boanerges; under their Ministry the Word of God mightily grew and prevailed.

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The DEDICATION.

The Distractions of the Civil War drove a great Number of the Puritanical Ministers into Coventry, as their City of Refuge, where they escaped the Violence of their Enemies, and greatly helped forward the good Work of Practicall Religion among you. Perhaps you may have yet some living that can remember the Weekly Days of Fasting and Prayer, that were then kept with uncommon Strictness and Solemnity.

Within two Years after the Restoration, the Citizens of Coventry were deprived at once of every Minister they had among them, in one Day they lost Dr. Grew, Dr. Brian, and Mr. Basnet, against whom their Enemies had nothing to object, save in the Matters of their God; but their excellent Instructions remained in many of the People, as Nails fastned in a sure Place by those Masters of Assemblies, being given forth by the Great Shepherd.

Many of us have received a very particular Account of the State of the Affairs of Religion with you, before and after that Change was made by the Act of Uniformity, and no one had retained a more distinct Memorial of those Matters, than that brave honest ingenious Gentleman Major Robert Beak, who for many Years was the great Ornament of your City and Society.

I now speak of Things within the Memory of several among you. While those faithful ejected Ministers were allowed to live in your City, they ceased not to instruct their affectionate People privately, and from House to House, and when the Severity of the Times removed them some Miles from you, they sent you their Sermons composed for your Use, and fairly transcribed, and not filled with Matters of doubtful Disputations, but with the great Essential Doctrines and Duties of the Christian Religion.

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Tho' I address my self chiefly to those that had been under the Ministry of the two Doctors already mentioned, yet I am sensible the Interests of real Godliness were promoted among you by some worthy Ministers of the Congregational Perswasion, such as Mr. Basnet, Dr. Singleton, and especially Mr. Boon of Finham.

Mr. Boon you have often heard was bred up a Lawyer, you know he was a Gentleman of a good Estate and Family, and I am perswaded it was out of a real Zeal for the Honour of Christ and the good of Souls, that he gave up himself to the Ministry of the Word; he was excellently qualified for it, and very useful in it, till Bodily Distempers and Weakness took him off from his constant Attendance upon it. He had a noble Genius, a wise, grave and serious Spirit; I had the favour of much Friendship from him, and was a Witness of the End of his Conversation.

When your Mininisters that had been Silenced among you were hasting off the Stage, God left not himself without Witness of his wonted Care for you; Mr. Jarvis Brian, and Mr. Shewell, were for some time the Helpers of your Faith and Joy: It was the general Character of Mr. Jarvis Brian, that his Life was a continual Sermon.

Mr. Shewell was born in your City, but had spent several Years in Kent, where he had been also silenced; and having for some time kept a private School in or near Maidstone, he returned to his Native Place, at a very seasonable time, when you wanted his Service, and gladly accepted of it.

After the Death of Mr. Brian, God was pleased to cast my Lot among you in the Year 1690. when I had just entred upon my 29th Year, I spent almost
13 Years

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13 Tears very comfortably with you; if my Ministry had any Success, I owe the Thanks intirely to God, if it met with any Acceptance, I am obliged to be thankful both to God and you.

There was something so very extraordinary attending the Death of Mr. Shewell, that I am perswaded you will always remember it, and think it ought to be left upon perpetual Record; for some time before he died, he had preached several Sermons upon the Subject of indwelling Sin, and was going on with it; the last Sabbath he lived he seemed to himself, and to you all to be in very good Health, we all expected he would have gone on with his Subject, upon which we had heard many excellent Sermons, but to our great surprize, he took for his Text. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirit. Phil. 25. This unexpected change of his Subject occasioned many Thoughts of Heart, enquiry was made of his Daughter, whether he had any design of leaving us, but nothing of that appeared, nor could she give any other account of the matter, but only that on the Saturday Evening, he did not come down to Prayer in his Family at the usual time, that she went up to his Study, and found him in some Confusion, he told her he was not able to go on with his Subject, he must preach from some other Text. If this was surprizing to you, it was much more so, when on the Wednesday after, at his turn in the weekly Lecture, he went up well into the Pulpit, and Prayed and read his Text, and then drop'd down in an Apoplectick Fit, and was carried out of the Pulpit into the Vestry without speaking one word more, in an Hour or two he died.

You cannot forget the astonishment with which our Minds were then fill'd, it was made plain to us all, that tho' he did not design that Sermon for his Farewell, yet God designed it should be so, how convincing was it to

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us then, that our times are in God's Hand, and the number of our Days is with him.

His Place was supplied after some time by the Reverend and Learned Mr. Joshua Oldfield, who spent some Years with you with good Acceptance and Success, till the Death of Mr. T. Kentish removed him to London.

After him God sent to you, your present Minister, who has now spent a great part of his Time and Strength among you, I can truly say when I thought it proper for me to leave Coventry, it was a great Ease and Satisfaction to my Mind, that you were not left without a skillful and faithful Shepherd.

Some of you know how much it was my desire that Mr. Joshua Merrel might succeed me among you, I was assur'd by long and intimate Acquaintance with him, he was capable of doing more than filling up my Place, and that if he came to you, he was like to be a great Blessing to the City.

His Father and Mother were Members of that Congregation at Knutsford in Cheshire where I was first Minister, they were exemplary Christians. This their eldest Son was very much observed and esteemed in his early Days for unusual Gravity, Seriousness, and Diligence, he had taken in much of the Spirit and manner of the Reverend Mr. Edge of Wilkington, under whose Ministry his tender Mind was formed for the Service of God, in every place where he came, he greatly improved in all useful Learning, in Divine Knowledge and Grace, he loved to converse with aged Christians, and would enquire out the times and places where they met together for Prayer and religious Conference, and would steal in among them, and valued such opportunities more than all the Diversions with which other young People use to fill their vacant Hours.

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I think it was a little before the dawning of our Liberty, that he was solemnly ordained in Darbyshire, by the aged ejected Ministers that lived in that Country, and spent many Years in a faithful discharge of his Duty in and about Uttoxeter in Staffordshire.

He certainly denied himself in his worldly Interest when he came to you, but it was his desire to be more publickly and statedly useful than he had been, if God should make his way plain before him; and now for the space of Twelve Years that he has lived with you, you have fully known his Doctrine, manner of Life, Purpose, Faith, Long-suffering, Charity, Patience; you have seen how he has honoured God, living and dying, with what Circumspection, and meekness of Wisdom he lived, with what calmness and serenity of Soul he received the Sentence of Death in himself, how willingly and well pleased he went down into the dark Valley, supported by that everlasting Covenant, which had been for so many Years settled and sealed between God and his Soul through Jesus Christ.

Those of us in the Ministry that stood about him, a few days before he died, must not forget his kind and faithful Advice, how earnestly he recommended to us, daily meditation on the holy Scriptures, as that which from his own Experience he could assure us was of great Advantage.

It seems his manner had been for several Years, to spend sometime every Morning, first in reading the Scriptures in course, than in meditating closely upon what he had read, and than in praying over the whole; we have reason to believe this way of spending his Morning time, contributed very much to his living, and preaching, and dying so well.

And now my Friends, give me leave to put you in mind, that the loss of your faithful Minister makes the present time to be an hour of Temptation to you. Your
Prudence,

The DEDICATION.

Prudence, your Humility, your Meekness, and mutual Love and Tenderness for one another will now be tried. Your due Esteem and Affection for your surviving Pastor, and your respect to the sorrowful Relict of him that is gone, the Subjection of your Wills and Inclinations to Reason and Religion, these Christian Virtues will now be put to the Tryal, and I hope when they are tried, they will be found to praise and honour, only keep your Hearts with all Diligence, and may the parting Prayer of the Reverend Mr. Shewell be now eminently answered to you, the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your Spirits. Amen.

I have detained you too long from the good Sermon you heard on this sad occasion, but if the short Historical account of the state of Nonconformity in your City, which I have deduced from several Ages past to your own times, may be a means to establish you in that way of worship and Communion, which comes nearest to the Scripture Standard, and to engage you to approve your selves in all things, in a manner suitable to your Holy Profession, and to the laudable Example of the several Generations of those good old Puritans from whom you are descended, it will be very much to the Satisfaction of

Your obliged, and very

Affectionate Friend

and Servant



W. TONG.

A

Funeral Sermon

On Occasion of the Death of the
 Reverend Mr. *Joshua Merrel, &c.*

H E B. xiii. 7.

*Remember them which have the rule over you,
 who have spoken unto you the word of God:
 whose faith follow, considering the end of their
 conversation.*

WHEN the Providence of God has made this sore Breach upon us, it should be the Concern of us all to make a wise and serious Improvement of it.

The Death of Ministers is a thing rare among us: And when God removes such as have been very Exemplary, and very Faithful, we have the greater reason to observe his Frowns, and fear his further Displeasure.

It is best for *them* that they are safely arriv'd in the World above; and therefore we are *not*

to weep for them: but we should for our selves; that we are left behind in the midst of Sin and Sorrow, without their Example and their Guidance.

Let this be that *one* thing we have the most of all in our Eye, which should be the Design of Funeral Discourses, The making some Spiritual Advantage of their Death, that by *the sadness of our Countenance our Hearts may be made better.*

This plainly appears to be the design of the Text I have read to you: Where the Divine Author being about to close this excellent Epistle, he crowds many weighty Things together; and among the rest, calls them to have a solemn regard for the Memory of those faithful Ministers, that *had been* among them.

It is true, the Text seems to speak of those that are *yet in being.* *Remember them that have the rule over you:* But it may as well be translated, *Remember your Guides;* which is spoken in the present time, only as a description of their Office, not with a reference to the Persons as then living. For all the rest of the Verse shews that these Holy Men were dead and gone; therefore they are bid to *Remember them;* its said, *They have spoken to you the word of God.* They are bid to *follow their Faith,* and to consider the *End,* that is, the *Issue of their Conversation:* For it is not meant of what they *aim'd at,* (but what their Life *issued in.* ' See, says the Apostle, how they finished their Course! what an excellent End they made! Remember what was the Resolution and Courage; what was the Calmness and Composure of Mind, what was the Hope and Comfort, with which they
' passed

' passed from this World to the other ; and let this Engage you to imitate their *Life*, and keep stedfast in the *Faith* which was once deliver'd to you.

In the Text I shall observe to you.

First, The Character of good *Ministers* while they live. *They have the rule over you : And do speak to you the Word of God.*

Secondly, The Duty of the *People* with respect to them after their removal by Death. *Remember them. Their Faith follow:*

Thirdly, The Motive to the performance of this Duty. *Considering the End of their Conversation.*

I am apt to believe that the Apostle does there refer to the good End that many of the *First* Ministers of the Gospel made as *Martyrs* for the Truths that they had preached to the People: They sealed their Testimony with their Blood, and thereby shew'd their firm belief of what they had deliver'd.

Tho' this can't be said of your deceased Minister, I think it is much the same thing that he could with so much inward satisfaction trust his Soul in the Hands of God; in confidence of the *Truth* and *Weight* of those Things which he had oft preach'd among you. And the same firm perswasion might, I doubt not, have enabled him to *Suffer* for those Truths, if God had by his Providence called him to it.

First, Let us observe the Character of good Ministers while they live. It may enhance our Value of such, when they are gone, to know what was the Nature of their Office, and to see how well they discharg'd it.

1. The first thing that is said of them is, That they have the rule over you. The Word signifies such as are Guides: Such as are Overseers: Such as are Captains, or Leaders, as well as those that, in other respects, rule and govern.

They are Guides to direct our way. By the Instructions they give they teach us what is Right, and by their Warnings they keep us back from that which is Wrong; from Error, or from the ways of Profaneness. It is the Mercy of God to a People to continue such among them: And whenever such are wholly wanting, that there are none left; or (which perhaps is worse) only those left who will lead others blindfold into the Ditch of Perdition: This is one of the saddest Cases that can happen to a People.

They are also Overseers. Their Business it is to take care of the Flock: To see what are the Church's Wants, and what are those Dangers that they are most expos'd to. Their Concern does not lye with Men's Estates, but with their Persons; and there it is with their Souls. They watch for your Souls as they that must give an account.

Over and above this the Word very properly signifies Leaders and Captains. Such as go before the rest to Encounter the Enemies of Christ in the World. Who, as they have the Post of Honour, are sure to have, above all others, the Place of greatest Danger. Especially it was so in the Times in which the Apostle writ; when
for

for Christ's sake they were kill'd all the day long. Or, Endured a great fight of Afflictions, tho' they had not yet resisted unto Blood. And all Ministers that will be faithful, as long as there are so many wicked Men in the World, are generally more exposed to the Hatred and Malignity of those wicked Men, to their cruel Mocking, nay, moreover to Bonds and Imprisonment, than others are.

To conclude, *They are Rulers* under the great Master of the Assemblies. They are chiefly concern'd to set in Order, and to keep up the Order of Religious Societies.

I would not magnify mine Office, above what it is indeed ; but all this, there is in it.

And this was discharg'd in an Exemplary manner by your Minister deceas'd. He was a faithful Guide, a watchful Overseer, a resolute Leader, and a prudent Pastor or Ruler among you.

2. Another part of the Minister's Character is, That *they speak to us the Word of God.*

And certainly it is the greatest, and most important part of their Work: St. Paul does ^{1 Cor. i.} not reckon so much on Baptizing as Preaching ^{17.} of the Gospel. 'Tis true, the Case is thus far different: The Apostle did preach to Heathens, to bring them to the Knowledge of Christ, and the Way of Salvation by him ; and to an acceptance of Eternal Life upon the Gospel Terms. We speak to a People *professedly Christian already*: But we have the same Work to do, to persuade Men to be *Inwardly and Heartily Christians.*

And

And perhaps it is with as much Difficulty, that some Men, *Who name the Name of Christ*, are brought to this, as those that are found in the darkness of Heathenism. It is therefore *Safe and Necessary* for you to have such as preach the *Word of God*.

They do not speak to you in their own Names, but in the Name of the great God, *Who made Heaven and Earth*; and who is in *Christ reconciling the World unto himself*.

They are *Ambassadors for Christ*, and therefore must speak not *their own Fancies*, nor *their own Passions*, but *only what is given them in charge*. *What they have receiv'd of the Lord that also they deliver to you*.

I call you to witness that was the constant Scope of his Ministerial Service, whom God has remov'd from us. He spoke to you *the Word of God* not *the Commandments of Men*. What he said was solid and substantial; in much applause of the rich Grace of God in Christ. He was an *Able Minister of the New Testament, of the Spirit, and not of the Letter*: And not so much concern'd to have *his Praise of Men*, as of God.

Secondly, I proceed now to shew the *Duty of the People with respect to them, after their removal by Death*. This is the main purpose of the Text: And I chose it with this express Design, that, if possible, this afflictive Providence under which we now are, may have a lasting good Effect upon this Congregation: That the tenderness, and regard, which I know you had for him, may be improv'd to a spiritual Advantage.

Your regard to those whom you valued, is not to be shewed by *building their Tombs*, and *erecting stately Memorials of them*. Tho' this in some cases

cases has been thought a proper Method of rewarding exemplary Virtue, and perpetuating the Remembrance of it.

It is not to be shew'd in your opinion of their Reliques, and worshipping of those that are now Saints above. The superstition of former Ages carry'd Men thus far. They rob'd God of his Homage, and Christ the Mediator of his Honour, on purpose that they might discover their Veneration for good Men. None of this is to be done in our case.

But when God removes your faithful Ministers, two things the Text directs you to ; *Remember them. And follow their Faith.*

1. *Remember them that had the rule over you.* The People who are Christians in earnest, cannot be so much taken up with the Affairs of the World, and of their own Families as to be utterly negligent of the Church of God, and what happens there. *If I forget thee O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning : If I do not remember thee, let my Tongue cleave to the roof of my Mouth ; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.* Now tho' the general interest of the Church of God is a much greater thing, than what belongs to any particular Minister ; yet where a Minister is remov'd that was faithful as a Servant in the House of God, and exemplary in Religion, we should have frequent Thoughts of him, and Thoughts of Heart about his departure.

Remember him therefore with Esteem, as one to whom God had given much of his Grace : On whom he had bestow'd a very solid Judgment, and great Capacity to do you Service : Who was justly valued by all that knew him round about,

Psalms
CXXXVII.
5. 6.

bout, who were the best Judges of *Men* or *Things*.

Remember him *with Affection*, as one that lov'd you, and has carefully fought your everlasting Benefit for many Years. His Memory should now be dear to you, and you should heartily grieve that such a *Light* is extinguish'd as to our World: That we are now depriv'd of the advantage of his Prayers, which were earnest before God; and I am perswaded, of great Service to this Place.

Remember him *with Thankfulness*. Bless God that when you were depriv'd of the very acceptable and useful Labours of others whom the Providence of God removed from you, that that Loss was so well made up in *his* Ministrations among you.

Tho' its matter of Grief that we *now* enjoy him not, yet we have cause to rejoyce that we *ever* had him, and that God was pleas'd to continue him so long among us, considering what a shatter'd, crazy Constitution was appointed to him.

I hope there are several among you, that have reason to thank God you ever saw his Face, or heard his Voice. The Word he has spoken has reach'd your Hearts; and those that were convinc'd before, he has been an Instrument of building up, and of comforting and directing a great many others.

In our Discourse together the very Evening before he dy'd, when I mention'd his usefulness, he reply'd, *That he hop'd he had done some good, but could not tell what good.* It were to be wish'd that they who under our poor Ministrations are awakened, or greatly confirm'd, would let us know somewhat of it, that we might be helpers of
their

their Faith and Joy. It would much encourage us, and help forwards our Joy: For what is our hope or joy, or crown of rejoycing? Are not ev'n ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? for ye are our Glory, and our Joy.

However tho' we know it not, if their be any good Work wrought in you, you are conscious of something of it, and should remember him that was the Instrument with thankfulness to God for him.

Remember him *with improvement.* Your Esteem and Affection is nothing without this. Your Thankfulness to God should be in order to this; that what benefit you did not gain by him in the time of his Life, you may have now upon recollection of what is past.

Some of you I beleive have been *pleas'd*, and *profited* at once, under what you have heard from him in publick, and private. You have rejoic'd in your sweet Sabbaths, and sealing Sacraments.

But I fear the most of us have reason to complain, tho' for a Season we *rejoic'd in his Light*, we did not walk, and work by it, as we should have done.

I intreat you to remember how he *preach'd* Christ, and him *crucify'd*. How earnestly he press'd you to come into him; exposing the folly and misery of your distance, or ev'n of your delay.

Remember how he has warn'd you against the Pride and Vanity of the Age, which Persons professing Religion are gradually reconciling their Minds to; till they are becoming as vain, and trifling as the rest of the World.

C

Remember

Col. 3.

Remember his cautions against *Worldliness*, and *Carnality*, and particularly what he has been urging in some of his latest Discourses, for the promoting of *Humility*, and *Meakness*, of *Peace* and *Charity*, by a mutual *Forbearance* and *Forgiveness*.

And I beg of you, among the rest, never forget what he has warmly urg'd upon you, for the carrying on of *Family Religion*, and *Closet Devotion*; And especially for your better attendance on the *public Worship*. It was what he oft lamented that on Lecture-days, so few would wait at *Wisdom's gates*: And that, at the hours of Prayer, we could not prevail over the sinful modesty of many good People among us, who by that were kept absent.

Remember these things to make you lament before God your unprofitableness; and if it may be, to redeem what was then lost by some after improvement.

2. I proceed now to the other Duty, *follow their Faith*. By this the Apostle would suggest to us, that the very best way of remembring such holy Men as were Pastors and Guides among us, is by *imitating* of them. By adhering to the *Doctrine* which they preach'd, and being stedfast and unwearied in the *life of Faith*, as they were.

There is the Doctrine of Faith, which was once deliver'd to the Saints, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. This was preach'd to you *diligently* and *purely* by your deceased Minister; what he said was not crude, and indigested, and with *impure Mixtures*; He gave you the *sincere milk of the Word*.

He had no affectation of *Novelties*: He was for the *plain, important Truths* of the Gospel, and what he press'd upon you was *Truth*. Now fol-

low

low his Faith and Doctrine. I would not have you implicitly adhere to any the best of Men: You are to call no Man Master upon Earth, for one is your Master, ev'n Christ. But follow him so far as he followed Christ. Be not carry'd about with divers, and strange Doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace. i. e. Its well to be fix'd, and clear in the Sense and Design of the Gospel, which is often called the grace of God. Verse 9.

The Converts that came in at first, when the Word began to be glorify'd in its mighty Conquest, They continued in the Apostle's Doctrine, and Fellowship: And if any of you should depart from that Doctrine, or that Fellowship, it will besides other Aggravations, be a sort of Reproach upon him that is gone. Ye therefore beloved seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away by the Error of the Wicked do fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. iii. 17, 18.

Besides this, There is the grace of Faith. The Faith of the operation of God: The Faith of God's Elect. This grace was Eminent in him that is departed from us. How clear was his belief of the unseen State! How firm his dependance on the Covenant and Promises of God! He over and over repeated that, that he did cast his Soul upon it. How fixed was his Hope in God! In the Power, and the Goodness, and the Faithfulness of God; so that he could freely, and comfortably trust all there. His Faith was in the Righteousness of Christ to recommend him to the accept-

ance of the Father. He disclaimed all Expectations from himself, and had recourse to the Lord Jesus as the Fountain of all divine aid, by whose *Assistance* he must *do his duty*; and by means of whose *intercession* that imperfect duty must be *accepted*. This *Faith* follow. Get that commanding, radical Grace. Learn to *live by Faith*: It is not only a *devout*, but a *divine* Life. It tends to make you profitable to others, and comfortable to your selves. But

Thirdly, I must proceed to the Motive considering the *End of their Conversation*. q. d. Did you but well observe how they liv'd, and how they dy'd that once ministred among you, it must surely have a very great influence on your Mind, and your Practice.

I said before that the Apostle may probably refer to *their End* who were *Martyrs* for Christ: but it is enough, if we apply it to those that *lov'd Christ to the Death*.

You are bid to *consider* what a good *End* they made: the word signifies a *repeated, serious, solemn Consideration*. It is good to review not only what you *have both learned and received*, but what you *have seen and heard* in him: and so doing, *the God of Peace shall be with you*.

Consider such was his *Faith*, it produc'd a good, and an *exemplary Conversation*. He shew'd his *Faith by his Works*. It was prov'd to be the like *precious Faith* with the rest of God's People, because it had the like *precious Effects*.

Effects; and was discover'd in a fruitful, holy Life.

But *unbelief* which is against the *grace* of Faith, or *Error* which leads from the *Doctrine* of Faith, these have each of them a mischievous influence upon the Lives of Men. *Vain* 2 Tim. ii. babblings will increase to more ungodliness. 16.

But you ought to consider further, *such was his Conversation, it had a comfortable, and an exemplary End.* Tho' he did not dye a Martyr in the Flames, he bore his Testimony for God in the *Fire of Affliction.* His whole Frame was *serious and solemn*; but it was *composed.* There seem'd to be no ruffle upon his Spirit as to his Everlasting State. Tho' he had not extasies of Joy: he was clear about his interest in Christ: and this he kept to the very last; committing his Spirit into the hands of God his Redeemer, at the close of Life.

Such an End as this was an *Honour to God*, to that Master whom he had *served with his Spirit in the Gospel of his Son.* God was *glorified in his Body*, both in his *Life*, and *Death.* While he *lived*, he *lived to the Lord*, and when he *died*, he *died to the Lord.*

This was also *comfortable to himself.* Its a vouchsafement more than ordinary to such as have walked with God, with great Circumspection. Ev'ry Christian, ev'ry Christian of *equal grace* has not this. Upon which account, such an End is the more to be consider'd.

And

And the rather because this tends to be very *useful to you*. It may make you remember him, and follow his Faith, both what he preach'd and what he lived, and died by. You may see there is certainly a great reality in Religion: There is somewhat in the Truths which a good Man believes; which will carry him above all the Fears and Terrors of Life, and Death: which will raise that fortitude of Mind, and beget that calm composedness, that fearlessness of dying, which all the Roman Virtue, so much celebrated, could never reach to.

In short such an End does shew, that the Principles he went upon are not only True but Substantial, able to bear the Stress of Trouble. God himself has own'd them in the Comfort he has given to his upright Servant in this way.

Uc 1.

I might now in the Application of this offer something to my Brethren in the Ministry.

You see your Calling, Brethren. The Pastoral Office lies in these two Things, to Rule and Teach. But no Man can ever maintain the Dignity of that Station, that does not attend to the Duty of it.

Care must be taken that our Faith be such as may be propos'd to others as their Pattern.

That the Doctrine we Preach be Scriptural, and the Principle of Faith we are acted by be truly Christian and Divine. And in a particular manner, they that Preach the Gospel should see to their Conversation. It will

will contribute to our own Comfort in the Close of Life, when we come to the *End of our Conversation*: And it will redound to our Honour, when they that knew us shall be induced to remember us with Affection, and with Esteem.

But I would chiefly apply my self to *use 2. this Congregation*: You have sustained a very great Loss; but the Word it self is *Immortal and Incorruptible*: Tho' they that Preach it are not so. You see *we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels*: But tho' the Vessel be broken, and laid by, the Treasure remains. *All Flesh is as Grass, and all the Glory of Man (the best of Man, and the best of Men) as the Flower of Grass. The Grass withereth, and the Flower thereof falleth away; but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is that Word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.* 1 Pet. 1. 24. 25.

Still the Patience of God is trying both you, and me a little longer: Let this Providence both quicken and teach us; It has something in it awakening and instructive.

It was the Design of your deceased Minister by all his Preaching among you, and by his Example, to teach you *how to live*, and now he has taught you *how to dye*.

Consider both his *Conversation*, and the *End of his Conversation*; and never think to separate *them*. Do not neglect God, and Duty, and your immortal Souls; and then have recourse to that vain Wish, *Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my last end be like his.*

It is in vain to expect, if you don't fill up your Course with Duty; that ever you should finish your Course with Joy, as he did.

Take care then, that ye be not slothful, but Followers of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises.

I have this to add to the near Relation, ready to be overwhelmed with Sorrow.

if you trust God and walk uprightly before him, your God shall supply all your Wants according to his Riches in Christ Jesus. The Supply shall come both in the way of Providence, and Grace of Peace and Glory. Tho' you are bereav'd of a tender Affectionate Relation, yet, remember that Promise, Thy maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name: And thy Redeemer, the holy one of Israel: The God of the whole Earth shall he be call'd.

And tho' your dear Relation be removed, it is but for a little while, and then you follow; In the mean time you have this to live upon, an Everlasting God, and an Everlasting Covenant.

Bless God you had, for so many Years, such an Help, and such an Example.

In this you were priviledg'd above most other Persons.

The ~~last~~ Affection will shew it self in being pleased with what is for his Advantage. If you loved him ye would rejoyce, because he is gone to his Father.

We know not what may yet come on this sinful Land ; but he has made his * *Escape from the windy Storm, and Tempest.*

It may be some relief to us, to hear what were the Vouchsafements of God to him : But I have prevented my self as to his Character.

He was a *Wise, Discreet Man* : able to advise others, as well as to conduct his own Way.

His *Ministerial Abilities* were *highly useful*, and tho' he was a Person of Knowledge and Learning, yet he studied to the last, he was a good *Minister of Jesus Christ, nourish'd* 1 Tim. iv. *up in the Words of Faith, and of good Doctrine* 1. *whereunto he had attain'd.*

He was of a *Catholic Spirit*, abhorring the narrowness of those Men, who confine the Church of God to such only as are of their Denomination.

His Temper was *Chearful, and Peaceable* : And I the rather observe this, how much
D he

* *ExCASSU*, which in the Text is translated the End of their Conversation ; does else where signify an Escape from some great Danger, 1 Cor. x. 13.

he had of Love, and Peace; because the Day before he dy'd, he was observing to me, with Satisfaction, that, for all our time together (now between twelve and thirteen Years) there had not been any Difference between us, that he knew of.

He was ~~of~~ a most tender Relation, and a kind Friend.

But that which shin'd most of all in him, and wherever it is, is worth all the rest, that was *his sincere Piety*. He said upon his Death Bed, That he hop'd the Work of God's Grace had been wrought in him for this Forty Years past.

He was a devout, good Man; and his Conversation as upright and regular, in the whole course of it, as most that I have known.

God was pleas'd to bring him to many Trials by Sickness, in a gross and weak Body. But *then* (especially in his last Illness) how great was his Faith in the other World! how supporting were his Hopes! he died with deliberation. He saw the approaches of Death with the greatest composedness; and profess'd often, That he grounded all his Comforts upon the Covenant of God in Christ.

Just before he died, he desired his Soul might be commended solemnly into the Hands of God: And now (we trust) he is with God, keeping an everlasting Sabbath. You shall hear him no more from this Place, but being dead he yet speaketh.



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